

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

The Examiner's cooperation during the in person interview of September 10, 2003 is greatly appreciated.

Claims 1-5 have been rejected as unpatentable over Kim, JP 10258694A in view of Honda, JP 2000016304A. Claims 6 and 7 have been rejected as unpatentable over Kim in view of Honda and DuRocher et al., US 5,090,730. Claim 8 has been rejected as unpatentable over Kim in view of Honda and Fosse et al., US 2001/0020782A1.. Claims 9-10 have been rejected as unpatentable over Kim in view of Honda and Hancock, US 5,074,161.

Claim 1 has been amended to further recite a reusable quick disconnect joint also permitting reconnection of the first and second shaft parts by the quick disconnect joint, the quick disconnect joint including a fastener extending through both the first shaft part and the second shaft part of the first shaft (Specification, pages 7-8, lines 12-24 & 1-3). Kim, Honda, and Hancock, alone or in combination, do not disclose an intermediate steering column with a reusable quick disconnect joint having a fastener extending through both the first shaft part and the second shaft part of the first shaft and the other claimed features.

Additionally, regarding claim 1, it is respectfully maintained that providing the steering shaft of Kim with a

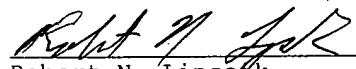
slip joint connection would cause the shaft of Kim to axially shorten when a load was placed on it. Thus, the member (30 or 105) would not fracture and the resultant steering shaft would not perform the load absorbing function for which it was designed.

Consequently, claim 1, as well as claims 2-10 which depend from claim 1, are in condition for allowance.

Allowance of the above identified application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,


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